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Engagement to Rivalry: American Relations With China Since the End of the Cold War

Mehmetali Kasim[1]

[1] Dr. Social Science Institute, Department of Eurasian Studies, Nigde Omar Halisdemir University, Nigde, 51240, Turkey. Tel: +90 5388236659. E-mail: kashgar16@gmail.com

Abstract
American relations with China is one of the most important bilateral relations in the world today. It will continue to do so in the foreseeable future, which will, ultimately, affect the peace and prosperity of the globe. Rising China, with its authoritarian ambition to become the main global player, is considered a fundamental challenge to liberal world order and American leadership in the twenty-first century. This paper, using qualitative analysis, firstly explores the change of global balance of power and its developments after the end of the Cold War. Secondly, it investigates American foreign policy towards China and its implications for Chinese foreign policymaking. At the same time, it covers the economic development of both countries as well as their different approach towards global issues. Lastly, current trends of world economic-political systems, the emergence of liberal and authoritarian blocks which are representing two global superpowers, and its significance to future international relations, stability, and opulence of the world are scrutinized.

Keywords: America, China, Liberal World Order, Authoritarianism, International Relations

Introduction

Since Richard Nixon built bilateral relations with China in 1972, interaction and engagement with Beijing have been considered Washington's interests (Bader, 2018). The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 in which America and Chinese cooperation played an important role. During the post-Cold War era, America, considered as a successor and leader of the liberal democratic world, has emerged as a sole global superpower on the planet. Washington continued its engagement policy towards China. She supported and helped the Chinese open market policy and joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001.

For almost two decades, the U.S enjoyed unprecedented power and influence in international affairs without peer competitors, which any great power had been able to share in world history. In recent decades, the fast economic rise of China and other developing world, the emergence of multinational organizations, further integrations of the European Union, and re-emergence of Russia greatly challenge the American hegemonic position in the globe. Especially, the unprecedented rise of China as one of the economic, diplomatic, and military powerhouses of the region and its global aspiration has become a main concern in current U.S relations with China (Mifune, 2007).

China is now the second major economy, second biggest military spender in the world after the USA, and has assumed that it will surpass the United States in the coming decades. China's rise is comprehensive in economics, politics, military, trade, diplomacy, ideology, and so on. Its aggressive actions in the international arena have created anxieties in the region, and it defied international law and norms, as well as failed to both liberalize the political system and commit market-based development at home and abroad (Bader, 2018). That's why Americans began to believe that China will be a more adversary to the United States than Russia ever was (Maher, 2018). White House senior director Evan Medeiros also has said that the world has entered a new normal that is defined by a period of persistent and consistent tension (Bermingham and Wu, 2019).

In this paper, ample analysis is given on the economic and political developments of the world since the end of the Cold War. In addition, structural change in world politics and its strategic significance to great powers is analyzed. Then, the cause of the structural change in bilateral relations between America and China from engagement to competition and its effects on developments of the international order is assessed. In the end, the Trump factor, as well as the rise and cause of anti-democratic uprisings in the west, are examined. Moreover, the emergence of authoritarian regimes around the world and deepening cooperation among them as an alternative or rival to the liberal world order and its effects on the international order is evaluated.

1. Changing Balance of Power after the End of Cold War

The democratic world, especially the United States and the EU, are unquestionably primarily leading force of shaping world politics, economics, and international affairs after the Cold War. But it does not mean that western influences are the same strong in all corners of the world. The collapse of the Soviet Union has left a rough balance of power in Eurasia. If either Russia or China begins to build up their military power, there are plenty of wealthy and capable states at either end of Eurasia to contain them. Indeed, Russia and China help to contain one another (R. Posen and L. Ross, 1996).

As the largest continent, Eurasia is considered fulcrum of the world. Most of the world's largest, dynamic, influential, and populous countries are there. These states possess formidable economic, military, and political assets due to which they want to build their own independent rules and sphere of influence in a different way. If not globally, at least regionally in the Eurasian subcontinent with different agendas from the west.

China's role in global governance is one of the defining questions for world politics in the 21st century. China's rapid growing economy, military power, and nationalism, and its gradual emergence as a global player over the last decade have primarily been the driving force behind her aggressive foreign policy, and iron fist authoritarian domestic policy. China's economic liberalization and growth are not at loggerheads in political liberalization and development towards western norms as she was attracted much by authoritarian leaders in Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, and the Middle East. China has also taken an active approach to sub-regional and regional institution building in Asia, thereby providing an alternative to the western dominated international organizations (Hill and Smith, 2011).

It's crystal clear that China has already become a leading member of a number of regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, and so on. It began to accelerate to project her economic power, interest, and political influence around the world. Recently, Beijing lambasted U.S global leadership, calling for emerging economies to forge a new world order that is less dependent on the volatilities of American domestic politics (Kimball, 2013). In this sense, decisions that Congress and the executive branch made regarding U.S Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military forces could influence the political evolution of the Pacific, which in turn could affect the ability of the United States to pursue goals relating to various policy issues, both in the Pacific and elsewhere. Even the U.S navy chief declared that the focus of this department in the future in the Asia-Pacific region (O'Rourke, 2012).

Most researchers focused on Chinese eye-catching economic performance, trade, security, and infrastructure developments and ignored to explore crucial trends going on very silently and smoothly, which is, in the end, gradually breaking off the current world economic and political system dominated by U.S. and EU. China's grand strategy to world domination has not been explicitly articulated in a formal declaration. But observing China's international behaviour in recent years might explain its strategic logic. Over the past several decades, China introduced open market and technology for its development. China's unprecedented economic expansion now exerts a gravitational pull on the world economy, gathering emerging markets in its orbit. Bolstered by its commercial heft, China's global ambition is increasingly built on ports, highways, and pipelines in the expansion of its supply chain empire. More than this, China's grand strategy is built on developing new markets for advanced Chinese technology (Araya, 2019).

China already became a second economic power in the world and the biggest manufacturing powerhouse on the globe. Besides this, its economy is very rapidly and steadily growing, unlike the EU in which we have seen stagnation or very little growth rate, even some member countries experiencing negative growth. The American economy is also growing at a smaller rate than China. This gives China more advantages over the EU and America to expanding its economic strength over time, which may force to change the global balance of power on the benefits to China. Unlike the EU and U.S, in the process of cutting their defense budget or showing very slow growth, China, on the contrary, is on the way to the rapid increase in its defense spending and modernization of the army. In this regard, China is not alone. Other global or regional players such as India and Russia following the similar steps of China due to which they are considered the competitors and even one day may become potential rivals to the West.

Since the end of the Cold War, bipolar world order had vanished. America emerged sole superpower on the globe both economically and politically. Further integrations of the EU, recovering from Russia, rapid economic growth in China and India after economic reforms in recent decades, hugely affect the global balance of power. In recent years, American led unipolar world order has been brought under question and Americans feeling their status threated by newly emerging powers, especially by China.

American policymakers began to believe China as the revisionist power and that it is economic, political, and military rise is of the defining elements of the 21st century. Peoples Republic of China (PRC), under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), undermines the international system from within by exploiting its benefits while simultaneously eroding the values and principles of the rules-based order (The Department of Defence, 2019). Russia, closely cooperating with China against balancing American influence and in recent years, has been implementing more aggressive and expansionist foreign policy wishing to regain its great power status, which she lost with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Parallel to the fast growth of emerging economies and their influence around the world, the American relative share of power is under steady decline in recent decades both in the economic and diplomatic sphere. Especially, the Trump presidency opened more room for other big and regional powers to play an active role in the international arena and weakened American positions. In comparison to China's ascent, there is an America in retreat. President Trump's national populism and protectionist trade policies have effectively undermined the very liberal order that once justified US leadership (Araya, 2019).

2. American Foreign Policy towards China: Strategic Cooperation to Competition

As an existing superpower, the American grand strategy towards the globe is unquestionable to protect the leading American role in the world and to curb the rival power wherever it emerges. These range from a narrow commitment to the basic safety of the United States to an ambitious effort to secure permanent U.S. global pre-eminence (R. Posen and L. Ross, 1996). Two factors characterize the rising great powers during the industrial era: the first is the accumulation of power and wealth; the second is the use of this power and wealth either to obtain a dominant position or to reshape the international order (Cheng, 2011). This is the same logic for the post-Cold War era. With the dissolving of the Soviet Union, there was no single power that accumulated wealth and strength to get strong enough to rival against the U.S. Even European Union was not considered to be an alternative to the

United States despite economic and technological advantages because of lack of political unity among member states. Japan was economically strong but militarily weak, Russia had been struggling to recover its economy, China was neither rich nor strong enough to rival, and she needed to buy time to prosper. On the other hand, other parts of the world, such as India, Africa, Latin America, and the Islamic world, had no ability to become competitors, because most of them were struggling for survival and getting out of economic hardships.

America enjoyed unprecedented power during the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. American decision-makers faced almost no strong opposition in the international arena during that period of time. America waged Gulf War and again started a war against Afghanistan and Iraq and so on under the banner of the war on terror. But these endless wars cost America a lot and exhausted its economy, restricted her from paying enough attention to developments in other parts of the world. As Brzezinski says, "Invasion of Iraq has galvanized a lot of hostility in the Islamic world towards the United States. American insensitive and ambiguous posture in the Israel-Palestinian conflict is also a very important reason for the hostility towards us. All this helps terrorism" (Brzezinski, 2006). American involvement in the long-lasting war in South Asia and the Middle East gives precious opportunity to countries like China and Russia etc. to develop their economy modernize defense, increase business, and diplomatic influence around the world without strong international pressure.

Post-1945, American led Liberal International Order is different from the authoritarian world view. It favors democratic forms of government, protection of human rights, and promotion of national self-determination. It emphasizes written and unwritten rules — freedom of navigation, nonaggression, peaceful settlement of disputes — meant to foster a relatively cooperative global environment (Brands, 2018). International organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) are playing an important role in liberal international order via promoting relatively open trade and global finance.

Since the Second World War, America used to share power at the multilateral level and became a strong defender of international order, which she created. But Trump administration turned the table. His rhetoric put America first and pursuing a policy, which emphasizing narrow-minded national interest only focusing on short term economic benefits ignored the core value of liberal international order such as human rights, fairness, democratic rules in international affairs, etc. America has withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and is renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), leaving its allies and partners in the lurch (Biscop, 2017).

Most important of all, pursuing short term self-interest in the Trump administration greatly damaged American reputation around the world. Punishment of adversaries and allies alike with imposing tariffs and threats has shaken the trust of allies and potential friends towards Washington. These, in the end, worked towards strengthening the position of rival powers and influence around the world while weakening America's significance and damaging allies' interest.

America and Europe are considered to be building blocks of liberal international order. Close ties and cooperation between them have been the main guarantor of surviving the current international system. But Trump's policy towards the EU has damaged bilateral relations. And, liberal world order facing a great challenge within itself while facing external threats from growing adversarial powers such as China, Russia, and Iran, etc. Although trade and investment links between the US and the EU are deep and extensive, the imposition of US tariffs – and retaliatory tariffs by the EU – threatens to diminish economic prospects on both sides of the Atlantic, damages transatlantic political ties, and undermines the rules-based international trading system (Schneider-Petsinger, 2019). Major areas of tension in bilateral relations have included the Iran nuclear deal, trade, burden-sharing within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and differing perceptions of the multilateral order (Lazarou and Harte, 2018).

Close allies in the Middle East also began to hesitate to American guarantee for their security and started searching alternatives around the world. Saudi Arabiya, one of the most important close allies of America, has been pursuing close relations with China and exposed willingness to cooperation even with Russia for diversifying its own

security dimensions. Turkey, America's only NATO ally, in the Middle East since Cold War feeling threated by America and its NATO alliance. Ankara is turning its attention away from west to east and on the way to ending its alliance with the authoritarian camp, which is represented by China, Russia, and Iran that are against the western liberal international order. Ties between Turkey and America was deteriorated when Trump is imposing heavy tariffs on Turkish goods, blocking the sale of F-35 and crisis of S-400 missile defense agreement with Russia. Even traditional allies such as Egypt and Pakistan have been deepening close ties with China. Trump's anti-Islamic rhetoric, recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and cutting defense aid for Pakistan was the main supporting factor of this trend.

China is considered to be a pragmatic example of globalization in the world. Since the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, it has grown very quickly and became one of the successful economies in the globe:

"*Its 20-year plan is to become like the United States today*. *The Chinese have been straightforwardly copying everything that has worked in the developed world: 19th-century railroads, 20th-century air conditioning, and even entire cities. They might skip a few steps along the way going straight to wireless without installing landlines, for instance-but they're copying all the same"* (Thiel, 2014).

Rise of China not coming from the miracle but employing western technology and investment, using Russian military equipment and experience as well as easiness for reaching the international market and gaining an advantage by exploiting its own vast majority of the cheap labor force. China, in the past, was not successful in innovation but mastered scaling productions of existing technologies that are innovated in the developed world and copied by China. Unlike America, China focused its long term ambition to become a dominant global power and to work very hard and systematically to strengthen its comprehensive national power. China is rising steadily, if more slowly as of late, as America's eventual coequal and likely rival, but for the time being, it is careful not to pose an outright challenge to America (Brzezinski, 2016).

Since the opening up to the world economic crisis in 2008, China's rapid economic development and accumulations of wealth considered to be beneficial for U.S. interests. But this kind of thinking began to change over time in recent years when China is becoming more assertive and aggressive in its foreign policy and becoming more authoritarian in domestic policy, which was against most of the western thinkers and policymakers' opinions. What they think was that economic prosperity and trade liberalization also lead to democratization. And American foreign relations with China after Mao administration built on the basis of economic cooperation and trade development between two countries. While there was American criticism on China's human rights abuse and so on, but that was mostly symbolic in nature.

In recent years, Americans began to fear and feel threatened by their national interest from China's rise in the economy. And most important of all, the technologic advancements as well as military build-ups and pursuing an independent foreign policy with global agenda make America worried. Trump administration sees America as a loser in bilateral trade with China. According to one of the top adviser of Trump:

Since China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001 and falsely promised to end its mercantilist and protectionist practices, America's apparel, textile, and wood furniture industries have shrunk to half their size—with textile jobs alone beaten down by 70%. Other critical industries like chemicals, paper, steel, and tires are under similar siege, while employment in our high-tech computer and electronics manufacturing industries has plummeted by more than 40%.

China's newly modernized Navy and Air Force feature everything from virtually undetectable nuclear submarines and the latest Russian-designed fighter jets to ballistic missiles that can precisely target America's aircraft carriers on the high seas. China's own "Pentagon" is confidently developing advanced weapons systems—many of which have been stolen from us by Chinese hackers and spies!—to shoot down our satellite and GPS systems and send nuclear warheads deep into the American heartland (Navarro: 2011).

China already became the world's largest economy by purchasing power parity (PPP) and the second-largest in the gross domestic product (GDP). And its economy is rising at the fastest speed than advanced economies such as the U.S., Europe, and Japan, etc. If consumerism grows, China's GDP will grow dramatically and will become the largest economy in the world (Heilbrum, 2014). This means that China will have more capability and advantage over the developed world to invest its own technologic research and development, modernize the defense industry, and gaining cutting edge military equipment, buying diplomatic influence around the world. Rising comprehensive national power, increasing nationalism, and weakness of the American government's ability to respond and tackle international problems, as well as lack of cooperation among weak neighboring countries to safeguard their own national interest, emboldened Beijing to implement more assertive and expansionist foreign policy. Beijing no longer wants to be subordinate power to the United States. China's grand ambition is struggling to become a global player exposing the alternative political and developmental models to the world.

3. America-China Factor to Shape Future International Order

World politics have been dominated by western liberal democratic countries over several decades. Western ideas and values are the primary norms of international systems today. The vast majority of people around the world who are representing various different civilizations and cultures have no voice in current world politics, such as Hindus, Muslims, Africans, Latin Americans, and Asians. Even countries like China and Russia are members of the United Nations Security Council, showing dissatisfaction towards the current international order. Moscow and Beijing both seek to weaken, if not yet to overthrow, prevailing rules and existing international institutions and, at least within the areas over which each hopes to exert a preponderant influence, to put new ones in their place (L. Friedberg, 2017).

The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business, and it is likely to remain that way. Although the intensity of their competition waxes and wanes, great powers fear each other and always compete with each other for power. The overriding goal of each state is to maximize its share of world power (Mearsheimer, 2001). It's difficult to avoid competition, sometimes even wars between great powers, to some extent. Because everyone wants to safeguard its national security and interest within and beyond its borders as possible as they can reach and maximize it. There is no limit to drawing a line for aspirations and ambitions of great powers. But they need to face reality to compete in the sizeable boundaries of the world. That's why sometimes their national interest is overlapping one another in different parts of the globe.

Every state doesn't want to retreat its core national interest in relations with other states. But they are forced to compromise under strong pressure and strong opposition, which she assumes or convinced that she has no ability or enough strength to tackle it. As countries gain strength economically, militarily, technologically, and so on, their ambitions and aspirations to power and influence also follow suit. Since economic reform in 1978, China has been rising at a very fast speed, which is very rarely seen in world history. They'll radiate more influence around the world. Certainly, they're exploring that in the South China Sea, along with Japan, and in the islands with Japan. Therefore, America is going to be tested (Heilbrum, 2014) because this region is one of the world's busiest trading lines and considered America's vital interesting area, which encompasses some of its closest alliances such as Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines. Protecting alliance and their national interest as well as checking on emerging rival powers has the main strategic significance to safeguard American leadership in the world. It should make sure it remains the most powerful country on the planet, which means making sure a rising China does not dominate Asia the way the United States dominates the Western Hemisphere (Mearsheimer, 2014).

When America was conducting costly and unrealistic war from Afghanistan to Iraq to Libya, it piled up a great amount of debt. If this money had been spent on improving infrastructure, education, research, and development, America could have been in a more advantageous position than rivals, and its leadership would be more stable and robust. Wars are not only costing lives and money for America but also damaging U.S. reputation worldwide. On the contrary to the United States, countries like Russia, China, India, and some others held the opportunity and made great progress in their own development.

Russia re-emerged as a strong player shortly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and considered herself as to its successor. It has strong defense capability, and its nuclear arsenal can be matched to the United States. But its economy, industry, and technologic base in other areas can't support its ambition to become a global superpower. India is different from Russia. It has a large population comparable to China. Its defense capability, economy, industry, and technologic developments are rising very fast. She is also pursuing an independent policy to cement its position in the region and increasing its own influence globally. India is still a very poor country, and its military does not match the United States, Russia, and not even comparable with China. That's why India, in the near future, is considered to be regional power; in the long run, it has the potential to become a global superpower.

The wider Islamic world is divided, and there is a lack of consensus among them. They are mostly poor and lack of modern industrial base to become a competitor to the world powers. Possibly in the foreseeable future Muslim world will not become a strong voice in international politics. Even from Europe, Africa and Latin America may not be able to produce strong global powers, at least in the first half of the 21st century. While in Asia, Japan has a strong economy and technological advantage, it is only considered as a regional power. Because its demography and military capability cannot afford it, and it has political hardship to develop independent foreign policy.

In this world today, only China can become a reliable rival or peer competitor to the United States. Since the opening up its economy China worked very hard and systematically to gathering great extent of strength in every sphere in which every great power needed. Its economy, industry, technology, business and trade, military, culture, values, and institutions, etc. can be rival to the U.S. Increasing comprehensive national power and global influence made China already emerged world power and Peking come to very close to become as a true global power. American's thinking of curbing China's rise seems incompatible to reality. China already has risen up, and it can be seen and felt in every corner of the world. The path of China, which she chooses to rise is different from other countries:

"*The rise of all the major powers in the world to date has been nothing but the possession of resource markets and consumer markets, or the use of the military to win or use of company to control the resource. We do not choose the rise of force, the use of commercial means is the only choice. Foreign exchange and a strategic head, the international financial team with an experienced operational brain should, therefore, be regarded as a new force for China's future rise"* (Xu, 2010).

In international politics, it seems that in the future, the main actors and competitors will be the United States and China, following with regional powers in Europe, Russia, India, Japan, and less extent medium-sized countries like Indonesia, Brazil, and Iran and so on. The rapid economic growth of the non-Western World, such as China, India, etc. over the past several decades has weakened western dominance in the international order. At the same time, it has created a high demand for energy and mineral resources. In 2011 alone, the increase in China's oil demand represented nearly half of the world's total increase. Given that nearly one-third of the world's civil wars taken place in oil-producing countries, any state that needs to import oil is likely to find its companies were operating in conflict-ridden states (Country Report, 2012).

China, in the past, pursued Deng's strategy of "hide your capacities, bide your time, accomplish things where possible" policy. Nevertheless, there has been a major shift from a "small-country" mentality to a "big country" mentality in Chinese leaders' strategic thinking after the leadership change in 2012 (Li, 2017). China began to shape international rules via using its led international institutions such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, Asia Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), and one of the grand strategy and ambitious project Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) and so on. Especially BRI, which aims at linking Eurasia to China's mainland and cementing China's dominant leadership in these regions, is reminding Chinese philosophical thinking of world order "Tian Xia" in which China is the center and other countries considered to be the periphery of the globe. China's BRI is the most ambitious project in the world today. And it consists of both land and sea routes to connect China to Eurasian landmass, even broader to Africa. Examining the significance and geographical coverage of the project reminds that as if this is the combination of Mackinder and Mahan in a single framework.

This exposes Chinese ambition and determination to become a truly global superpower in both lands and by the sea, which any great power never succeeded before.

Asia's rise is fundamental, which would open the way to change the balance of power in the world. And there is a related set of economic and political challenges in how the West reacts to the changing geopolitical landscape in the Eurasian landmass and in Asia Pacific regions. This reaction includes everything from the Western belief that liberal democracy is the end result of history to the increasingly fierce competition over markets and natural resources in the Middle East and Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America (B. MacDonald and Lemco, 2011).

Americans believe that:
"If China is democratic and enmeshed in the global capitalist system, it will not act aggressively; instead, it will be content with the status quo in Northeast Asia. According to this logic, the United States should engage China in order to promote the latter's integration into the world economy, a policy that also seeks to encourage China's transition to democracy. If engagement succeeds, the United States can work with a wealthy and democratic China to promote peace around the globe.

Unfortunately, a policy of engagement is doomed to fail. If China becomes an economic powerhouse, it will almost certainly translate its economic might into military might and make a run at dominating Northeast Asia. Whether China is democratic and deeply enmeshed in the global economy or autocratic and autarkic will have little effect on its behavior, because democracies care about security as much as non-democracies do, and hegemony is the best way for any state to guarantee its own survival" (Mearsheimer, 2001).

China's growing naval capability enables it to effectively deal with vast waters around the South China Sea (SCS). But the growing military presence of China's strategic rivals, specifically the US and India around the SCS, is accelerating China's perception that its sovereignty around the SCS is significantly threatened (Kwon, 2019). China's emergence and rising comprehensive national power itself considered as a threat to U.S. hegemony on the planet. Because history tells us that as countries become richer and stronger, their dependence on other countries will be weakened. At the same time, their position to pursue independent policy and ambitions to become a hegemon in their own way will be naturally strengthening.

Realist politicians in both countries know this logic very well. That's why America advocated pivot to Asia policy during the Obama administration, and now they developed Indo-Pacific strategy in Trump administration. Whatever the name of the strategy, its specific aim is to counter potential rivals such as China and Russia. China and Russia had the alliance to counter against the United States during the Cold War period. Now, once again, they are cooperating with each other. This is not considered a political alliance but a necessity to safeguard the geostrategic interest of both countries (Xu, 2010). China feels threated by American military presence in East Asia, SCS, and South Asia, as well as by strengthening U.S. military alliance in these regions. Russia also feels threatened by NATO expansion in East Europe and by economic pressure from the United States. Although, in some areas, there is mistrust and rivalry between Russia and China, but they have a common interest to counter against American hegemony.

Since most of the global powers possess nuclear weapons, direct military confrontation between them is considered dangerous and costly. That's why competition game among them is mostly on economic and diplomatic lines which aim at weakening rival and wining over it without direct military confrontation. Controlling the international market and global resource is the most common norm. Buying alliance and attracting like-minded states and using periphery against rival powers is considered the safest and effective way to win over it. China and Russia are supporting some countries like Iran, Central Asian states, Venezuela, and so on. Most of them are authoritarian and have a strong enmity to the United States. This will help to enforce their influence in these regions and weakening American hegemony. Even some American alliance such as Turkey, Pakistan and some Middle Eastern countries which are feeling threated from liberal global order and becoming more economically dependent on China going away from the west and seeking a new alliance with China and Russia.

Every country pursues its own policy in a different manner. Russian strategy is to keep its hegemonic position in the old Soviet sphere, and its ambition is not global but regional. Iran's aim is mostly survival of the current regime and being a hegemon in its surrounding area. Pakistan, North Korea, Turkey, and some Middle Eastern and Latin American countries desire merely the survival of the current authoritarian government from the western-style democratic uprising. Most of them have no regional or global ambitions, and if so, they neither have the ability nor capability to do so.

China's rivalry with the United States is far beyond the mere survival of the regime and state. Its strategy is long term and global. Its strategic ambition is realizations of China's dream and turns China into a prosperous, strong, and most advanced country. By 2021, China would bring per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) up to the level of moderately developed countries and realize modernization in 2049 (Norton, 2015). There is an estimation of China's surpass the United States in total GDP by 2025 and even GDP per capita sometime after mid-century. This is considered a form of the bedrock foundation of aggressive, confidence foreign policy establishment in the immense of a China-dominated world system (Babones, 2017).

With the growing economic might, China's military budget and technological investment are increasing significantly. Cutting-edge weaponry has been developed endogenously or purchased from foreign countries. China's growing economic, military, and political influences on the international scene, and its position as a global power, and its assertiveness in sea territorial disputes could have significant impacts on both the regional and international orders (Kwon, 2019). China's steady rise would cause fear among its neighbors. United States' leading position in Asia-Pacific would be shattering. In order to prevent these phenomena, they would seek to contain China, probably by trying to form a balancing coalition. The result would be an intense security competition between China and its rivals, with the ever-present danger of great-power war hanging over them. In short, China and the United States are destined to be adversaries as China's power grows (Mearsheimer, 2001).

Conclusion

The dissolution of the Soviet Union gave America an ample opportunity to emerge as a sole global power without peer competitors. It enjoyed a short period of unprecedented power and influence in the international arena during the eve and the first decade of the 21st century. But this trend had come to an end when the great changes happened in the structure of the global balance of power. Mainly because with the re-emergence of Russia, unprecedented rise of China, and fast developments of major countries around the world, while America is making a grave strategic mistake and struggling with endless and costly wars around the globe, especially in South Asia and in the Middle East.

China's emergence has much more great significance comparing to other emerging countries because of its size, technological might, different ideology, culture, and political system, which is rival to the west. American engagement policy towards China, which assumed close cooperation and helping economic opening up, which would ultimately lead China to embrace the free market and democratization, has utterly failed. And it gave China precious opportunity to rise up. Now, when China has become more prosperous and powerful, its foreign policy is also getting more assertive. And she transformed economic wealth into military might. America began to feel threatened, its presence in Asia-Pacific, from China's increasing influence in this region. China's pursuing aggressive foreign policies to her neighboring countries by unilaterally claiming territorial sovereignty on the East and Southeast Asia, territorial disputes with India and other neighboring countries are also the main concern. Russia's occupation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimean was challenged for the legitimacy of the current international system. In response to these developments, America declared a rebalancing strategy toward Asia and later developed the Indo-Pacific strategy curbing the increasing influence of mainly China and Russia and to a lesser extent, Iran.

Countries such as Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, North Korea, and so on, which are feeling threatened by America and western led democratic world order began to make more close cooperation with China. While there are some

differences among them but they have a common interest against western hegemony. Nowadays, the American position as a sole global power to dominate international politics has begun to question. More and more countries around the world, which are mostly undemocratic, began to see China's model as an alternative to the U.S. led a liberal democratic order. Along with that, increasing anti-democratic uprisings in the west and authoritarian upheaval around the world is the main concern and menace to the future stability of the international system. There are strong assumptions that the world, in the long run, is going towards multi-polarity which will be dominated by countries such as America, China, and India, and so on. But in the near future, it's possible to say that the world system and strategic competition will be dominated by two global powers i.e., U.S. and China and to less extent by some regional players around them.

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